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PENITENTIARY SUIT

ATLANTA (AP) -- FIVE PRESENT AND FORMER INMATES OF THE ATLANTA FEDERAL PENITENTIARY HAVE FILED A \$2.5 MILLION LAWSUIT AGAINST THE CIA, CLAIMING THEY SUFFERED PERMANENT DAMAGE FROM DRUG EXPERIMENTS FINANCED BY THE AGENCY ABOUT 20 YEARS AGO.

THE SUIT, FILED TUESDAY IN U.S. DISTRICT COURT HERE, ASKS \$500,000 IN DAMAGES FOR EACH OF THE FIVE PLAINTIFFS. IT NAMES CIA DIRECTOR WILLIAM CASEY, BUREAU OF PRISONS DIRECTOR NORMAN A. CARLSON AND U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAM FRENCH SMITH AS DEFENDANTS.

THE PLAINTIFFS CLAIM THEY WERE USED AS GUINER PIGS IN DRUG EXPERIMENTS CONDUCTED BETWEEN 1955 AND 1961 WHILE INCARCERATED AT THE PENITENTIARY. THEY SAID THEY WERE TOLD THE PROGRAM WAS AIMED AT FINDING A CURE FOR SCHIZOPHRENIA.

THEIR SUIT SAYS THE EXPERIMENTS ACTUALLY WERE AIMED AT TESTING "THE MIND ALTERING AND DEBILITATING EFFECTS OF VARIED CHEMICALS UPON HUMAN SUBJECTS."

THE PLAINTIFFS CLAIM THE DRUGS GIVEN TO ABOUT 60 PRISONERS DURING THE PROGRAM WERE "DANGEROUS AND WERE LIKELY TO CAUSE DEATH OR SERIOUS MENTAL AND PHYSICAL INJURY" AND THE EXPERIMENTS WERE CONDUCTED WITH "WANTON AND RECKLESS DISREGARD FOR THE HEALTH AND SAFETY" OF THE PRISONERS.

THE SUIT CLAIMS THE FIVE HAVE SUFFERED HALLUCINATIONS, FLASHBACKS AND PARANOIA AS A RESULT OF THE EXPERIMENTS.

ADM. STANSFIELD TURNER, THEN DIRECTOR OF THE CIA, REVEALED IN 1977 THAT THE TESTS WERE FUNDED BY THE AGENCY. HE TOLD TWO CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES THAT THE EXPERIMENTS WERE AIMED AT TESTING THE ABILITY OF DRUGS TO DISTURB MEMORY, CHANGE SEX PATTERNS AND CREATE ABERRATIONAL RESPONSES.

FILING THE SUIT WERE DON R. SCOTT, NOW AN INMATE IN A MEMPHIS, TENN., PENITENTIARY; JOHN R. MALONE, AN INMATE AT THE ATLANTA PENITENTIARY WHO ESCAPED IN DECEMBER 1980; JAMES T. KNIGHT, AN INMATE AT THE ATLANTA PRISON; SHERMAN H. DOWN, WHO NOW LIVES IN THE ATLANTA AREA, AND FERRELL V. KIRK, WHO LIVES IN NORTH GEORGIA, ACCORDING TO ATTORNEY TOM MADDOX, WHO FILED THE SUIT.

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